

More Miscellaneous Quotes

Always the beautiful answer who asks a more beautiful question –
E.E. Cummings

In Europe and America there is a strong tendency to identify morality and spirituality. But anyone who has common sense and looks around, is aware that there are a great many people who are moral saints, but lack inner peace and do not know true happiness. In the East the identification of morality and spirituality is as a rule avoided. – Mees (Intro to The Key to Genesis)

Jesus said, “If you bring forth what is within you, what you bring forth will save you. If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you.” The Gospel According to Thomas, trans. Elaine Pagels

The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves, and not to twist them to fit our own image. Otherwise we love only the reflection of ourselves we find in them. – Thomas Merton

In an age where there is much talk about “being yourself” I reserve to myself the right to forget about being myself, since in any case there is very little chance of my being anyone else. Rather it seems to me that when one is too intent on “being himself” he runs the risk of impersonating a shadow.
– Thomas Merton, from ‘Day of a Stranger’, 1965

Long Chen Pa, on The Natural Freedom of Mind:

Since everything is but an apparition
perfect in being what it is
having nothing to do with good or bad,
acceptance or rejection,

one may well burst out in laughter.

trying to quiet the mind
is just more activity—Seng Ts’an

“As a poet I hold the most archaic values on earth. They go back to the upper Paleolithic: the fertility of the soil, the magic of animals, the power-vision in solitude, the terrifying initiation and rebirth, the love and ecstasy of the dance, the common work of the tribe. I try to hold both history and wilderness in mind, that my poems may approach the true measure of things and stand against the unbalance and ignorance of our times.” Gary Snyder

The essential function of the universe . . . is a machine for the making of gods. – Henri Bergson

The true mystic just opens their heart to the onrushing wave. – Henri Bergson.

I hear people talking about going on a vacation or something and I think, what is that about? I have no desire to go on a trip. My perfect day is sitting in a room with some blank paper. That’s heaven. That’s gold and anything else is just a waste of time. – Cormac McCarthy

The trouble with illusions... is that you aren’t aware you have any until they are taken from you. – Mary Doria Russell

I loved, and still love, the tripping I did in those wild days. I never was good at sports but, with the wings of acid and pot, I got to experience joy like a well-trained Olympic athlete, getting to do something wild and free and fast and heavy. It was like skydiving or rock climbing or racing motorcycles. It was dangerous. Sometimes it was holy. I don’t have another way to say that. It’s not that I knew what holiness was and recognized it when I

tripped. It's that tripping gave me my first touch with holiness in my life and I measure the holiness of the world against what I learned while tripping. I feel blessed to have seen—and been present in—those apocalyptic times. – Steven Gaskin, Foreword to *Amazing Dope Tales*.

The male/female dichotomy is just about the most disruptive metaphor going. – Beverley Hammon

“For small creatures such as we the vastness is bearable only through love.”—Carl Sagan

“It is a large morning to be thoughtful about.” Carl Sandburg

You do not decide where to go, and then begin going there. In real life, while you're deciding where to go, you are already traveling. (107) Jeremy Denk.

To be overbearing when one has wealth and position
Is to bring calamity upon oneself. (Lau trans. Tao Te Ching 9)

“Never play the piano! The piano plays itself.” Art Tatum.

If you awaken from this illusion, and you understand that black implies white, self implies other, life implies death—or shall I say, death implies life—you can conceive yourself. Not conceive, but feel yourself, not as a stranger in the world, not as someone here on sufferance, on probation, not as something that has arrived here by fluke, but you can begin to feel your own existence as absolutely fundamental. What you are basically, deep, deep down, far, far in, is simply the fabric and structure of existence itself. So, in Hindu mythology, they say that the world is the drama of God. God is not something in Hindu mythology with a white beard that sits on a throne, that has royal prerogatives. God in Indian mythology is the self, *Satcitananda*. Which means *sat*, that which

is, *cit*, that which is consciousness; that which is *ananda* is bliss. In other words, what exists, reality itself is gorgeous, it is the fullness of total joy. – Alan Watts

To feel that life is meaningless unless “I” can be permanent is like having fallen desperately in love with an inch. – Alan Watts

“You don’t play the piano—the piano plays itself!” Art Tatum

Ego is social institution with no physical reality. The ego is simply your symbol of yourself. Just as the word water is a noise that symbolizes a certain liquid without being it, so too the idea of ego symbolizes the role you play, who you are, but it is not the same as your living organism. – Alan Watts

This chapter is important for the light it throws on the way the advanced follower of the Tao manifests in the world. I take it to be speaking of the center of gravity of the wise teacher’s outward action and the quality of attention he or she brings to it. To put it simply, the principle intention in the life of the wise is to pass on to others what they have understood of the Way. This, surely, is among the highest forms of human love, the crux of the mystery in human relationships. Love for one’s neighbor here does not mean “liking” the other; it has nothing to do with emotional attraction, nor is it organically or socially conditioned family, sexual, or intellectual love. For the wise, the other is neither “good” nor “bad”—the other is only an individual who is or is not following the Tao. And because all meaning and happiness for humanity depend ultimately on following the Tao, the wise teacher seeks only, and naturally, to arrange the details of his or her relationship to others to support and further their progress along the way. This is an immensely important issue, within the confines of which lies the whole question of spiritual transmission, communal forms, and the metaphysical basis of ethics. – Jacob Needleman on Tao Te Ching v. 27

“The between is not a midpoint. It’s not an average or compromise. Those are abstractions we make up in our minds. The between has a life of its own, born of whatever is on either side of it. It is a quality of relatedness & also a quality of potential.”—
alchemist Catherine MacCoun

What you already have is better than what you so desperately seek.
– Anthony Doerr, *Cloud Cuckoo Land*

“I used to believe materialism was the opposite of spirituality, but from psychedelics I realized the opposite of spirituality was egotism.” Michael Pollan (GTUx interview)

There is another world, but it is in this one. — Paul Éluard. *Il y a assurément un autre monde, mais il est dans celui-ci... Œuvres complètes*, vol. 1, Gallimard, 1968.

Source: <https://quotepark.com/quotes/1750011-paul-eluard-there-is-another-world-but-it-is-in-this-one/> Also it came up that this quote is often attributed to either Celan or Rilke.

Tradition does not simply exist... it must be created anew every day. What is modern today will be tradition tomorrow. Let us not forget that everything we do and say must be considered as a moment in a continuous tradition. Otherwise tradition is dead, dead, and thrice dead. Karlheinz Stockhausen

It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he was never reasoned into. – Jonathan Swift

The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death. – Proverbs 21 : 6

From this I reach what I might call a philosophy; at any rate it is a constant idea of mine; that behind the cotton wool is hidden a

pattern; that we — I mean all human beings — are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art. *Hamlet* or a Beethoven quartet is the truth about this vast mass that we call the world. But there is no Shakespeare, there is no Beethoven; certainly and emphatically there is no God; we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself. And I see this when I have a shock. Virginia Woolf, *Moments of Being*

“Nature is a Haunted House—but Art a House that tries to be haunted.” Emily Dickenson

Ah, but a man’s reach should exceed his grasp
Or what’s a heaven for? Robert Browning ‘Andrea del Sarto’

“He was not quite sure what to do next. But he would think of something.” Arthur C. Clarke, *2001*

Some questions you cannot ask anyone older. They will laugh or frown or give you advice. You have to just hold the question in your hand and wait for the answers to come or not as they please. Brian Doyle, *Bird to Bird*.

Nikola Tesla: “My brain is only a receiver, in the Universe there is a core from which we obtain knowledge, strength and inspiration. I have not penetrated into the secrets of this core, but I know that it exists.”

Science is almost impotent to cope with the particular case, the isolated instance. Promoting their methodological ineptitude to the rank of a criterion of truth, dogmatic scientists have often branded everything beyond the pale of their limited competence as unreal and even impossible. (Huxley, *Perennial Philosophy*, 27)

Robert McFarland – I have a swift, chilling sense of the *Kalevala* as part of a messaging system, the warnings of which we have not heeded or even heard. (Underland, 417)

C.S. Lewis excerpt, in a 1948 essay:

If we are all going to be destroyed by an atomic bomb, let that bomb when it comes find us doing sensible and human things—praying, working, teaching, reading, listening to music, bathing the children, playing tennis, chatting to our friends over a pint and a game of darts—not huddled together like frightened sheep.

“It’s not difficult to be mindful—what’s difficult is to *remember* to be mindful.” – Mojo Sam

That most terrible drug—ourselves—which we take in solitude. -
Walter Benjamin

Goethe: “Tell a wise person, or else keep silent, / because the mass man will mock it right away.”

An alternative earth culture has adopted the Global Standard Deity, merging all the various gods into one, the GSD, in hopes of bringing peace, harmony, tolerance, and so on, to all creation. The founder “had decided many years before that the problem with religion wasn’t religion itself but its flagrant misuse as an absolutist argument to promote narrow tribal agendas.” – Jasper Fforde, *The Woman Who Died A Lot*.

[The Manchid is speaking]: “All of everything came into existence simply because it wanted to be. The big bang wasn’t so much a big bang as a hasty dash toward an opportunity to trade nothingness for somethingness. The main contributory factor to the entire universe was a momentary effect in need of a cause. And in that split second, everything that wanted to have existence—which

is everything—came racing through in one huge hot mass. They've been trying to sort themselves out ever since.”

“Kind of like a Harrods sale?” I suggested. “When the doors suddenly open?”

“Exactly like that. Only with six quintillion shoppers all trying to get to the knockdown perfume counter in a trillionth of a second—and through a garden hose.” – Jasper Fforde, *The Woman Who Died A Lot*.

Let us imagine a man who has been sentenced to death and, a few hours before his execution, has been told he is free to decide on the menu for his last meal. The guard comes into his cell and asks him what he wants to eat, offers him all kinds of delicacies; but the man rejects all his suggestions. He thinks to himself that it is quite irrelevant whether he stuffs good food into the stomach of his organism or not, as in a few hours it will be a corpse. And even the feelings of pleasure that could still be felt in the organism's cerebral ganglia seem pointless in view of the fact that in two hours they will be destroyed forever. But the whole of life stands in the face of death, and if this man had been right, then our whole lives would also be meaningless, were we only to strive for pleasure and nothing else — preferably the most pleasure and the highest degree of pleasure possible. Pleasure in itself cannot give our existence meaning; thus the lack of pleasure cannot take away meaning from life, which now seems obvious to us. – Victor Frankl

"To grasp the full value of the mythological figures that have come down to us, we must understand that they are not only symptoms of the unconscious (as indeed are all human thoughts and acts) but also controlled and intended statements of certain spiritual principles, which have remained as constant throughout the course of human history as the form and nervous structure of the human physique itself.

"Briefly formulated, the universal doctrine teaches that all the visible structures of the world – all things and all beings – are the effects of a ubiquitous power out of which they rise, which supports and fills them during the period of their manifestation, and back into which they must ultimately dissolve. This is the power known to science as energy, to the Melanesians as mana, to the Sioux Indians as wakonda, to the Hindus as shakti, and the Christians as the power of God. Its manifestation in the psyche is termed, by the psychoanalysts, libido. And its manifestation in the cosmos is the structure and flux of the universe itself."

Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Part II - "The Cosmogonic Cycle"; Chapter 1 - "Emanations"; Section 1 - "From Psychology to Metaphysics"

(courtesy of the Joseph Campbell Foundation)

By not quite accepting, because they do not please us, things that are *so*, we spend our entire lives making meaningless gestures somewhere next door to reality. – Nan Shin

Heraclitus:

It is the opposite that is good for us.

It is not good for men to get all they wish to get.

It is sickness that makes health pleasant; evil, good; hunger, plenty; weariness, rest.

“Against stupidity even the gods struggle in vain.” Friedrich Schiller

If this discussion has left you confused and perplexed, you are in very good company. The best scientists too are a long way from deciphering the enigma of mind and consciousness. One of the wonderful things about science is that when scientists don't know something, they can try out all kinds of theories and conjectures, but in the end they can just admit their ignorance. – Yuval Noah Harari, *Homo Deus*, p111.

“I’m not trying to prove anything, by the way. I’m a scientist and I know what constitutes proof. But the reason I call myself by my childhood name is to remind myself that a scientist must be absolutely like a child. If he sees a thing, he must say that he sees it, whether it was what he thought he was going to see or not. See first, think later, then test. But always see first. Otherwise you will only see what you were expecting. Most scientists forget that.... The other reason I call myself Wonko the Sane is so that people will think I am a fool. That allows me to say what I see when I see it. You can’t possibly be a scientist if you mind people thinking that you’re a fool.” Douglas Adams, *So Long, And Thanks For All the Fish*, p. 165.

This idea of course supports the related notion that the first essential for consciousness is change, particularly noncyclic, irregular or startling change. And such a concept explains why mere knowledge, which is generally static even when not instinctive or inherited, is seldom very conscious (depending on your definition) while learning, which always involves change, is much more likely to be conscious (by any definition). (Guy Murchie, *The Seven Mysteries of Life*, 268)

Pynchon, *Bleeding Edge*:

When she goes to Shawn with this, she finds her guru, in his own way, freaking out also. “You remember those twin statues of the Buddha that I told you about? Carved out of a mountain in Afghanistan, that got dynamited by the Taliban back in the spring? Notice anything familiar?”

“Twin Buddhas, twin towers, interesting coincidence, so what.”

“The Trade Center towers were religious too. They stood for what this country worships above everything else, the market, always the holy fuckin market.”

“A religious beef, you’re saying?”

“It's not a religion? These are people who believe the Invisible Hand of the Market runs everything. They fight holy wars against competing religions like Marxism. Against all evidence that the world is finite, this blind faith that resources will never run out, profits will go on increasing forever, just like the world's population—more cheap labor, more addicted consumers.” (338)

The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.

—Picasso (probably not) The oldest source found (1993):

The purpose of life is to discover your gift.
The work of life is to develop it.
The meaning of life is to give your gift away.
—David Viscott

In this world
Hate never yet dispelled hate.
Only love dispels hate.
This is the law,
Ancient and inexhaustible.
--Buddha, Dhammapada

Teilhard de Chardin: “The history of the living world can be summarized as the elaboration of ever more perfect eyes within a cosmos in which there is always something more to be seen.”
(placed in Gita XIII)

I am of the order whose purpose is not to teach the world a lesson but to explain that school is over. Henry Miller

"We must be willing to let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us."
— Joseph Campbell

You are not a drop of water in the ocean, you are the entire ocean in a drop. –Rumi

(From Heron Dance, via Jean)

Confucius asked Tzu-kung “Do you think I learn in order to increase my knowledge?” Tzu-kung answered, “Well, don’t you?” Confucius replied, “No. I seek the one thing that ties everything together.” (Lunyu: 15.2)

- from Lao-Tzu’s [*Taoteching*](#) translated by Red Pine (??? Maybe the intro)

Uttering a word is like striking a note on the keyboard of the imagination. - Ludwig Wittgenstein, philosopher (1889-1951)

If you ask me how they knew about the caves which none of the country people seemed to know of, I can only answer that I don’t know. Only I know that everyone you know knows a lot of things that you don’t know they know. E. Nesbit (Harding’s Luck)

The answer is never the answer. What’s really interesting is the mystery. If you seek the mystery instead of the answer, you’ll always be seeking. I’ve never seen anybody really find the answer. They think they have, so they stop thinking. But the job is to seek mystery, evoke mystery, plant a garden in which strange plants grow and mysteries bloom. The need for mystery is greater than the need for an answer.

Ken Kesey

“Promise me you'll always remember: You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.”
- Christopher Robin to Winnie-the-Pooh

“Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man.” Tagore

Tagore: “Death is not extinguishing the light; it is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.”

No matter how slow the film, Spirit always stands still long enough for the photographer It has chosen. Minor White (Mirrors Messages Manifestations)

A common man marvels at uncommon things; a wise man marvels at the commonplace. – Confucius

“Let each of us examine his thoughts; he will find them wholly concerned with the past or the future. We almost never think of the present, and if we do think of it, it is only to see what light it throws on our plans for the future. The present is never our end. The past and the present are our means, the future alone our end. Thus we never actually live, but hope to live, and since we are always planning how to be happy, it is inevitable that we should never be so.” Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), from *Pensées*

“A journey is like marriage. The certain way to be wrong is to think you control it.” John Steinbeck, *Travels With Charley*, p.4

“Spiritual living is accepting reality at any cost” – Simone Weill

We don't want to be free from our problems, for to be free from them is to put an end to ourselves. – U.G. Krishnamurti

For centuries, theologians have been explaining the unknowable in terms of the-not-worth-knowing. Henry Louis Mencken.

To your mind I am mad. To my mind you are all sane. So I pray to increase my madness and to increase your sanity. My madness is from the power of love. Your sanity is from the strength of unawareness. (Sufi saying)

“An adult is one who has lost the grace, the freshness, the innocence of the child, who is no longer capable of feeling pure joy, who makes everything complicated, who spreads suffering everywhere, who is afraid of being happy, and who, because it is easier to bear, has gone back to sleep. The wise man is a happy child.” - Arnaud Desjardins.

“Never be an adult in this society, it means someone who has stopped growing.” Timothy Leary.

"The concept of duty has been a means used by the holders of power to induce others to live for the interests of their masters rather than for their own." -Bertrand Russell (placed in III, 17)

Make your interests gradually wider and more impersonal, until bit by bit the walls of the ego recede, and your life becomes increasingly merged in the universal life. An individual human existence should be like a river — small at first, narrowly contained within its banks, and rushing passionately past rocks and over waterfalls. Gradually the river grows wider, the banks recede, the waters flow more quietly, and in the end, without any visible break, they become merged in the sea, and painlessly lose their individual being. – Bertrand Russell

Elphie stamped away. This was too much like her childhood, discussions with her father [fundamentalist preacher] and Nessarose [sister] about where evil begins. As if one could ever know! Her father used to orchestrate proofs about evil as a way of persuading his flock to convert. Elphie had come to think, back in Shiz, that as women wore cologne, men wore proofs: to secure their own sense of themselves, and thus to be attractive. But surely evil was beyond proof... (Gregory Maguire in *Wicked*, p. 231)

Norman Rush in *Mating* (1991): “A deep calm drenches the male soul when it feels the persona it inhabits being firmly screwed into a socket in some iron hierarchy or other, best of all a hierarchy legitimately about killing.” (p. 224)

Job: 19:28, Ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?

32:9 Great men are not always wise.

5:7 Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

"The greatest obstacle to discovery is not ignorance -- it's the illusion of knowledge.' Daniel J Boorstin.

"Strange how the most civilized of the world in their time carry on experiments in extermination of their brothers and sisters, not as conquerors, but as victims of an evil they define. Stranger still how the most civilized find justice for their behavior in the words of the God they created, the only real and true God, whose beneficence to them justifies their indifference to their enemies even as it makes sacred the theft of that enemy's land. Yet more strange is the sanctimonious efforts that follow their extermination and conquest to establish, with all those who watched the butchery, a document that testifies to the equality of all humans, a universal declaration of human rights to ensure that it will never, never, never, ever happen again - until more land is needed and God's word, newly interpreted, justifies yet another extermination of the infidel."

William A. Cook

From Eknath Easvaran, on a pair of verses in the Gita:

In a sense, the words of an inspirational passage like this are not just words. They are more like depth charges, which are set to go off when they reach a certain level of consciousness. In meditation, by the concentration we give, we drive each word deep into consciousness so that it can release its potential. But when these words explode, instead of causing damage, they heal. Internal conflicts are resolved, doubts and reservations fall away, and we get the certitude that we are equal to challenges from which we used to run away. (Vol. II, 377)

Meister Eckhart - "When God laughs at the soul and the soul laughs back at God, the persons of the Trinity are begotten. When the Father laughs at the Son and the Son laughs back at the Father, that laughter gives pleasure, that pleasure gives joy, that joy gives love, and that love is the Holy Spirit"

If you can stay close to nature, to its simplicity,
to the small things hardly noticeable,
those things can unexpectedly become great and immeasurable.
~ Rainer Maria Rilke

Robert Ludlum (The Bourne Identity): The easiest thing in the world is to convince yourself that you are right. As you grow older, it grows easier still.

There had been enough things from early on in my life to teach me that being an imbecile is a tremendously effective way of getting along in America. If it had been more satisfying I would have stuck to it. – Thomas McGuane, from *Driving on the Rim*

Sherlock Holmes: How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth? (In *The Sign of Four*)

I grieved to think how brief the dream of the human intellect had been. It had committed suicide. It had set itself steadfastly towards comfort and ease, a balanced society with security and permanency as its watchword, it had attained its hopes—to come to this at last. Once, life and property must have reached almost absolute safety. The rich had been assured of his wealth and comfort, the toiler assured of his life and work. No doubt in that perfect world there had been no unemployed problem, no social question left unsolved. And a great quiet had followed.

It is a law of nature we overlook, that intellectual versatility is the compensation for change, danger, and trouble. An animal perfectly in harmony with its environment is a perfect mechanism. Nature never appeals to intelligence until habit and instinct are useless. There is no intelligence where there is no change and no need of change. Only those animals partake of intelligence that have to meet a huge variety of needs and dangers.

H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine*, Chapter 10.

Ursula Le Guin, *Tao Te Ching* (Shambhala Publications, 1997):
Verse 57, in part:

The more restrictions and prohibitions in the world,
the poorer people get.

The more experts the country has
the more of a mess it's in.

The more ingenious the skillful are,
the more monstrous their inventions.

The louder the call for law and order,
the more the thieves and con men multiply.

MacFarlane, Robert, in *Underland*:

The real underland of language is not the roots of single words, but rather the soil of grammar and syntax, where habits of speech and therefore also habits of thought settle and interact over long periods of time. Grammar and syntax exert powerful influence on the proceedings of language and its users. They shape the ways we relate to each other and to the living world. Words are world-makers—and language is one of the great geological forces of the Anthropocene. (112-3)

The advantage of being old and ugly is that you needn't care a damn for anybody. Or even somebody. You can grin when you feel like grinning. And skip when you feel skippy. So long as your boots don't fall off. Second childhood. People make allowances, including yourself. Which is you in particular. Anonymous you. (Joyce Cary, *The Horse's Mouth*, 162)